

CHAMBERS' JOURNAL EDINBURGH

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF "CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE,"
"CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE," &c.

NUMBER 293.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1837.

PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

For obvious reasons, death is regarded by most of us with very solemn feelings. As the close of the life of this world and the beginning of that of eternity, it is entitled to the most serious thoughts that can be bestowed upon it; and he who does not contemplate it with such thoughts, must be strangely blind to all which it implies. Men of calm temper, nevertheless, may fairly be allowed to question if any good end is to be served by the mere terrors with which our instinctive love of life has invested death. It is surely possible to be fully alive to all the responsibilities imposed upon our mysterious nature, which death is so well calculated to remind us of, and yet to look forward to the close of our mortal life, without any undue alarm on account of the simple act of dying. Some degree of repugnance to death is no doubt natural, for, with a view to the conservation of our being, we have been inspired with a love of life, which necessarily causes us to wish to avoid and postpone death. But this feeling, like all others, is meant to be obedient to reason, and it is a duty accordingly to employ reason in regulating it.

Fancy and superstition have been allowed too much exercise with reference to death. We inherit from ignorant ages—the childhood of the world—many notions respecting it which have no just ground in nature. It is emblematised as a being, relentless, insatiable. In the form of a human skeleton, armed with a dart, it stalks, in the imaginations of men, from death-bed to death-bed, transfixing its victims with its weapon, and thus giving to the most natural and easy of deaths, the appearance of a death of violence. The last moment is supposed to be attended with certain struggles and pangs, as if life had a battle to fight with its gloomy foe, and sunk under the severity of his blows. The pallor and other appearances arising from the withdrawing or vitiation of the circulation, and as natural in the circumstances as at another time is the ruddy hue of health, are seized on by the imagination, and held up as the insignia of the triumph of this dismal spectre. When life has ceased, the insensible body immediately becomes the subject of formalities, most of which are calculated to keep up the same impressions respecting death. Watching, funeral trappings, hearse ornaments, the cold desolation of the sepulchral vault, and the thick-spread emblems of the uncheerful burial-ground, together with many other things associated with the ordinary disposal of the dead, all tend to this purpose, so that it is scarcely possible to look along the way which our friends have gone, without horror at the idea of following them.

Now, it is highly questionable if these notions and superstitions respecting death do not in some degree tend to deter many individuals from encountering those solemn considerations, which the subject, in a higher point of view, is calculated to awaken, and which it is a recognised duty that we should not only encounter, but keep at all times more or less present before us.

A steady and rational view of death presents it in a different aspect. We see in it only a natural event in the history of every organic being, an event as natural as birth, and which forms, in fact, an essential condition of life. It is utterly inconsistent with every idea we can form of an organised structure, that it should exist in its organised form for ever. In all such structures, there is an appointed progress from the acorn, as it were, to the fully ripened tree; and just as certainly as that there is a beginning to the existence of either animal or vegetable life, so certainly must there be an end. It is an affecting, but most true reflection, that nothing is qualified more significantly to point out to us that we must, in common with all living things, one day quit the stage, than the sight of

those endeared beings whose infancy we dandle, with pride and pleasure unspeakable, upon our knee. The beginning proclaims the end; and when we see the aged granddame on her death-bed, and the blooming infant held over her to print upon her colourless lips a parting kiss, we see in the one state but the prefiguration of the other. The granddame of to-day is but the infant of a somewhat distant yesterday. She once was, like this, a tiny and fair-haired being, protected and fondled by equally kind parents, and the expectant of many years of life. And now, having gone through her appointed course, she is—what this infant must be after the same number of years, if she should live so long. And such has been the way of life for thousands of years, and many such histories have been begun and finished, and followed by others in endless succession, scarcely one of which is now the subject of a thought to any presently living being, though no doubt they are recorded somewhere. But in the very feelings which this progressive system evokes, may we not see much to reconcile us to it? If we were not to feel as sons and daughters, as sisters and brothers, and finally as parents, were we not in succession the subjects of kind parental affection and the bestowers of it, if we were not alternately to give and receive the gentle attentions called for by the feebleness of infancy and the infirmity of old age, how different and how much less worth having were the boons of existence itself! Clearly, if a short life has been given to us on earth, our earthly enjoyments are all accommodated to that condition; and though it is perhaps possible for us to imagine some other condition, it is beyond our power to devise enjoyments suitable to it.

While mortality is an essential condition of organisation, it is equally certain that it has not been designed to act as a terror or a hardship. Although, in the present state of society, a considerable proportion of deaths are premature, means have been given, in human sagacity and in sanitary products and regulations of nature, to enable man in the long-run to overcome (speaking generally) all the dangers to which life is exposed in its progress, so that it shall, in the great majority of cases, last till its appointed term. When it does so, its close takes place under circumstances which cause it to be rather welcomed than dreaded. The sensibilities become much blunted ere then. The keener affections die out with their objects. The pleasures of the world cease to charm. The thoughts become bent on the world beyond the grave, and we fall into death as into a quiet sleep. But, even in cases of the premature extinction of life, it can be shown that death comes as a relief and a blessing. The human frame does not, it must be remarked, become liable to dissolution in the youth or maturity of its powers, unless some severe injury has been inflicted upon it. This injury may be of the nature of a wound, or of some less palpable form of violence; but in all cases a great injury must have been inflicted. When an injury takes place, nature makes every effort to cure it, and medical art may be called in to aid nature in these efforts; and if the injury be at all repairable, it will be, by the use of the proper means, repaired. But if the injury be so very severe, or be allowed to become so very severe, that it cannot be repaired, nor life be sustained with any tolerable degree of comfort, death comes in to relieve the sufferer. It is not death, then, which is to be dreaded in such cases, but that miserable condition of distemperament and disorganisation, which death alone can alleviate. Thus, even in the exception from the general rule of nature, we may see the operation of divine benevolence.

The act of dying itself, instead of consisting, as is

vulgarly supposed, in some pang or struggle of unimaginable intensity, or of a blow from an unsex adversary, is usually attended by no strong sensations of any kind. In cases of death from old age, "long before the commencement of the

* Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history.'

the power of feeling has wholly ceased, and the physical struggle is carried on by the vital power alone, in the absence of all consciousness of the sentient being, whose death may be said to precede for some time that of the body. In this, as well as in the gradual decline of the sensorial faculties, and the consequent diminution both of mental and of physical sensibility in advanced age, we cannot fail to recognise the wise ordinances of a superintending and beneficent Providence, kindly smoothing the path along which we descend the vale of life, spreading a narcotic mantle over the bed of death, and giving to the last moments of departing sensation the tranquillity of approaching sleep." *

In the class of premature deaths, the symptoms are generally of less gentle kind; yet, neither in these cases, it is believed by those who are best informed, are any unusual sensations experienced. Death, in all cases, takes place in one or other of only two ways—by syncope or by asphyxia. When it takes place by syncope, it is the nervous system which is attacked. There is an absence of all corporeal struggle. The mind remains clear to the last, or is affected only by the sensations peculiar to the malady under which the patient is labouring. There may be suffering from the disease, as there is when death is not threatened; but the close of life is placid and painless. When death takes place by asphyxia, the symptoms are more distressing to the bystanders. The lungs, becoming filled with the mucus which lines their passages, are gradually unfitted for their ordinary functions. The blood is not sent to the extremities, which consequently become cold, pinched, and pallid. What blood continues in circulation is imperfectly arterialised, in consequence of the obstruction of the air in the lungs by mucus. In this state it communicates with the brain, which is lulled by it into stupor. Until the lungs become completely suffused with mucus, they act in some small degree, and life is sustained, but in a state very different from its usual condition. The breast, indeed, heaves convulsively, and a great struggle seems to be going on; but these actions are wholly automatic. They are carried on in a part of the system which is at all times independent of the will, and in all probability are accompanied by no clear sensation of any kind. The brain, affected by the venous blood, is no longer capable of distinct sensations, and, as the laborious respiration proceeds, it becomes always less and less so. Slight deliriums are then sometimes experienced. The patient talks incoherently of things perhaps long forgotten, or expresses anxieties on account of his temporal or spiritual affairs. But this very delirium proves the obtuseness of his sensations. Finally, all animal life, including of course the mental functions, ceases, and only the organic life continues in action—the life of which we have no consciousness. The breast may then heave more convulsively than ever; but the patient is for ever removed beyond the reach of human suffering.

In an American tract which has fallen by chance into our hands, and which bears the title of "Erroneous Notions of Death Reproved," the author advances many religious arguments to much the same

port as the above observations, and shows most convincingly that a rational view of death is much more conducive to pious ends than the childish and ignorant alarms which are generally entertained. He concludes in the following terms:—“ Does nature abhor dissolution? Behold the signs of decay and dissolution which winter spreads around us. Behold nature in her annual death—the precursor of renovated life. But we will not argue from emblems. We will admit that a living being must naturally dread to part with life. But he dreads to part with life, only in a greater measure, as he dreads to part with every thing that is his. He is averse to the loss of property, and in some instances almost as much so as to the loss of life itself. He is reluctant to part with any one of his senses; and this reluctance, compared with the natural dread of death, is in full proportion to the value of that organ. Let us rationally look at the subject in this light. Doubtless we dread the loss of the sense of hearing, for instance; and when that is entirely gone from us, hearing is dead. We dread the loss of sight; and, that light extinguished, seeing is dead. Thus one faculty after another departs from us, and death is at work within us, while we say that we are in the midst of life. So let us regard it. So let us familiarise to our minds the thoughts of death, and feel that this dreaded enemy, dreaded, partly, because imagined to be so distant and unknown, has already made its lodgment in our frame, and, by familiar processes, is approaching the citadel of life. It seems to us strange, it seems as if all were wrong, in a world, where from the very constitution of things, death must close every scene of human life, where it has reigned for ages over all generations, where the very air we breathe and the dust we tread upon was once animated life—it seems to us most strange and wrong, that this most common, necessary, expedient, and certain of all events, should bring such horror and desolation with it; that it should bring such tremendous agitation, as if it were some awful and unprecedented phenomenon; that it should be more than death—a shock, a catastrophe, a convulsion; as if nature, instead of holding on its steady course, were falling into irretrievable ruins.

But it is not a strange dispensation. Death is the fellow of all that is earthly; the friend of all living. It is not an anomaly; it is not a monster in the creation. It is the law, and the lot of nature.

* Not to thy eternal resting place,
Shall thou retire alone. *

Thou shalt lie down

With patriarchs of the infant world, with kings,
The powerful of the earth, the wise and good,
Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales,
Stretching in penitent quietness between;
The venerable woods, rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks,
That make the meadows green, and, poured round all,
Old ocean's grey and melancholy waste—
Are but the solemn decorations all,
Of the great tomb of man.”

THE EDINBURGH FISHWOMEN.

In a late article entitled “Fishing Villages,” the reader was presented with a brief and merely incidental notice of the singular class of women who supply the Scottish capital with fish. In that article, the description of the persons and manners of the fishwomen was not only a mere outline, but it referred exclusively to the females of the village of Newhaven, who, from the comparative nearness of their usual residence to the city, are necessarily the least unsophisticated of the sisterhood. At Fisherrow, a suburban portion of the town of Musselburgh, about six miles from the capital, a full moiety of the Edinburgh fishwomen reside; and these, it is remarked, are upon the whole the most primitive and peculiar portion of the tribe. The reader will probably have no objection to a more minute description of this singular class of human beings, in which the denizens of Fisherrow are chiefly referred to.

The earliest notice of the fishwomen that we have ever seen, occurs in the *Mercurius Caledonius*, a newspaper published in 1661, and in which the rejoicings of Scotland for the Restoration are minutely chronicled. The notice on this occasion is so characteristic, that we may well believe the fishwomen to have then been exactly the same rough-spun creatures which they are at this day. It states, that on the 12th of June, “sixteen fishwives are to trot from Musselburgh to the Cannon Cross [the cross of the burgh of Canongate, in Edinburgh] for twelve pair of lambs’ harrigans.”* The characters, habits, and personal aspect of these women, are so unlike those of the neighbouring rural population, that some believe them to be a peculiar race, descended probably from foreign settlers, whose manners they still retain. But, though this is the case, we believe, with the inhabitants of the fishing village of Buckhaven in Fife, it is not so with those of Fisherrow and Newhaven. In their case, it is obvious that the character is modified, like that of every other class, by their occupation; and

just as the occupations of soldiers, sailors, clergymen, lawyers, &c. are found to impart a peculiarity of manners to each class, so does the occupation of these dwellers by the sea-shore produce in them that striking singularity observable in their character and manners. Perhaps too the circumstance of their marriages being confined chiefly within the limits of their own *caste*, may conduce to the same result. In our present remarks upon them, let us begin with their *dress*; for, as the philosophic traveller exclaimed on discovering that he had been plundered at an inn of his whole wardrobe, “alas, what is man without clothes!” The dress of these sturdy *ichtyophagists* is distinguished for its amplitude, substantiality, and picturesqueness. A cap of cotton or linen, surmounted by a stout napkin tied below the chin, composes the investiture of the head; the more showy structures wherewith other females are adorned, being inadmissible from the broad belt which supports the “creel,” that is, fish-basket, crossing the forehead. A sort of woolen pea-jacket of vast amplitude of skirt conceals the upper part of the person, relieved at the throat by a liberal display of handkerchief. The under part of the figure is invested with a voluminous quantity of petticoat, of substantial material and gaudy colour, generally yellow with stripes, so made as to admit of a very free inspection of the ankle, and worn in such immense numbers, that the bare mention of them would be enough to make a fine lady expire. One-half of these ample garments is gathered up over the haunches, puffing out the figure in an unusual and uncouth manner. White worsted stockings and stout shoes complete the picture. Imagine these investments indued upon a masculine but handsome form, notwithstanding the slight stoop forward which is almost uniformly contracted—fancy the firm and elastic step, the toes slightly inclined inwards—the clear eye of robust health—and the ruddy complexion resulting from hard exercise, perhaps sometimes from dram-drinking—and you have before you the *beau-ideal* of fishwives. It is amusing to observe how soon these characteristic peculiarities of dress begin to be exhibited. Look at that group of mere girls, who, with grotesque and unwieldy motions, are enjoying a game at *pall-lal*. The hair is already beginning to be smoothed down on each side of the forehead. Perhaps a cap of incongruous dimensions, with no finical pretensions to cleanliness, encloses the sun-burnt face; the bed-gown or pea-jacket has already acquired an unusual longitude; the petticoats are emerging into great bulk over the haunches, the decadent part retiring gracefully up the leg; and the whole figure strikingly displays the inchoate fishwife.

In the transactions of their trade, there are several peculiarities deserving of notice. Their system of merchandise, in its first steps, is of the simplest kind. Having in the morning borrowed the necessary capital from some shopkeeper, they invest it in fish, which having bestowed in a basket of a form fitted to the back, surmounted by one of an elliptical and shallow make, they trudge off to market, a distance of from three to eight miles, under a load which most men would have difficulty in carrying, and which would make even the strongest stagger. Many proceed to the usual fish market-place, and there wait for customers; but the generality perambulate the streets, wakening the echoes with their “most sweet voices,” emitting cries more loud than agreeable, and which a stranger would never imagine to have the most distant connection with fish: occasionally, too, they may be seen pulling the door bell of some house where they are in the habit of disposing of their commodity, with the blunt inquiry, “Ouy haddies the day?” As the price of the article in which they traffic, varies considerably according to the state of the weather, and the success of the fishermen, these unscrupulous traders are in the habit of taking as much for their goods as they can get. To ask at first double the price which they would be disposed ultimately to take, is therefore quite common, and it is generally thought a safe mode of effecting a purchase to offer the one-half of what is demanded. This is about the limit, however, of their attempts at extortion; for if less than the half should be offered, they will reckon it a high affront. An anecdote is related of a lady who had been for only a short time at the head of a domestic establishment, who, being determined to play the thrifty housewife, had come down stairs to conduct in person the important negotiation with the fishwoman. The selection was made, the price demanded and stated, and the lady, in the height of her economical zeal, professed about a third of the sum named. Fishwives have a sense of propriety, and consciences too, although many slanderous insinuations have been made to the contrary. The indignant “Maggie” could not brook so glaring an insult, and, shouldering her creel with an air of wounded pride mingled with ineffable disdain, shouted in a voice not modulated to the politest tone, “Gae wa, mem, an’ play on your peacock (piano); ye ken naething about fish!”

The business and scolding of the day being finished, groups of these sturdy traffickers are seen leaving the city in the direction of their homes, the emptied basket hanging lightly on their backs, the supporting belt now stretching across the bosom, and a sound of voices accompanying their onward march, compared with which the confusion of Babel must have been a mere whisper. Not without sundry pauses by the way do they reach home. Divers mean but snug hostels line their homeward path, and therein do the weary journiers solace themselves with libations of a

potency that would speedily upset heads less impermeable. Their first care on reaching home, after ascertaining that none of their children have been burnt to death in their absence, is to repay the loan contracted in the morning, knowing well that a want of punctuality in this matter would utterly cut off all hope of a future supply; and if the lender be a dealer in spirits, as is often the case, a finishing potion is accomplished in his back parlour, by way of “usance” for the small capital furnished. While treating of the peculiarities of their traffic, we may record the following characteristic anecdote:—A clergyman, in whose parish a pretty large fishing village is situated, in his visitations among the families of the fish-carriers found that the majority of them had never partaken of the sacrament. Interrogating them regarding the reason of this neglect, they candidly admitted that their trade necessarily led them so much to cheat and tell lies, that they felt themselves unqualified to join in that religious duty. It is but justice, however, to add, that, when confidence is reposed in them, nothing can be more fair and upright than their dealings; and, as dealers in a commodity of very fluctuating value, they cannot be justly blamed for endeavouring to sell it to the best advantage.

In their domestic habits, cleanliness is certainly not a predominant feature. Amongst their aristocracy, however, there is much comfort of a rude kind. Their dwellings generally consist of one, or at most two, apartments. Where any attempt at neatness is made, the stone or clay floor is found sanded, and the hearth and chimney whitewashed. A bed or two of wood stand against the walls, and in front of them some ponderous chests repose their massive bulk. A singular kind of ornament is often found over the fire-place, consisting of an immense number of small earthenware vessels called “bowls,” piled in a pyramidal form to the height of two or three feet. The smoke-begrimed visage of some old admiral frowns from the wall, despising the adornment of a frame—a hideous stucco imitation of a parrot, painted blue and yellow, occupies a conspicuous position on the window sash—a fish-basket or two are dimly seen in a corner—children without number are rolling about on the floor, and festoons of fishing-nets depending from the bed-tops, impart a graceful shading and relief to the whole picture. In the rearing of their offspring, they cannot reasonably be charged with an over-indulgent tenderness. The “young idea” shoots up amidst much neglect and many storms. The mother is frequently in the market three or four days after her babe first sees the light. Where there is a large family, the elder ones are locked out, and the younger are locked in, whilst the mother is from home engaged in the drudgeries of her occupation. Parental advice generally finds its way to the heart with the impressive accompaniment of some sound boxes on the ear. Not that indulgence is altogether unknown, for the little unlicked cubs thus nurtured have frequently to be bribed to school with oranges or gingerbread. The idea that nastinesses conducive to health, is religiously maintained; and, accordingly, in the morning, numerous specimens of the infant human animal may be seen rolling about on the margin of some puddle, garnished with oyster shells, in all the freedom of utter nakedness, and partaking of all the enjoyment which the utmost filth can impart. It would be surprising, considering their ignorance, if among these denizens of the sea-shore superstition did not exercise a considerable influence; and many of the superstitions once prevalent among all classes, but which education has now generally put to flight, still linger here in all their strength. We shall not stir this mass of absurdity further than to notice a superstition peculiar, we believe, to fishwives. It is, that before a child is baptised, it is extremely unlucky for the mother to go abroad, and consequently no consideration will tempt a fishwoman across her own door until that ceremony be performed.

Patiently as they drudge, they are not without moments of occasional relaxation and glee. When a marriage takes place amongst them, joy puts on its happiest smile, and mirth its broadest grin, and for a little they forget all the miseries of fish unsold, and the heavy pressure of severe toil. Amongst them marriages are contracted on singular grounds, it being thought improper for a young couple to take this important step before the woman, in their phraseology, “be able to win a man’s bread.” From the moment the fishing-boats touch the shore, the husband is nobody. On the wife devolves the task of turning the fish into money, and hence to her falls the control of the domestic purse, and the chief direction of the domestic economy; and there is a case well authenticated, of a prudent dame bringing forth, after a course of years, her hoarded store, to the utter amazement of the unconscious husband, purchasing with it a small property, and placing the family in comfort and comparative affluence. When the marriage day arrives, there is a gathering of friends. Before a large fire hangs a huge leg of mutton suspended by a string from the roof, in its slow gyrations dropping savourily on a dish of mashed potatoes underneath. There is an unwonted decking of forms unused to much decoration. White is the prevailing dress, garnished with a profusion of pink ribbons, which scarcely outshine the cheeks they are meant to adorn. The indissoluble knot is tied, and the evening is devoted to all manner of jollity. The awkward gambols of unwieldy and unskillful dancers, the circling glass of gin or rum, the obstreperous and unsuppressed laugh, the monotonous and interminable

* Lungs and livers.

sea-song, the pipe of tobacco, a volume of smoke rolling from the puckered mouth like the top of a steam-boat funnel—all contribute to the general happiness. In amusements of a masculine cast, they have been known also to share. Several years ago, a humorist who resided near a fishing village, was wont to get up a match at golf among the fishwives, and he one day started half a dozen of them on race to the top of Arthur Seat, a hill distant about five miles. The weight of petticoat carried, we have never learned.

Rough in manners as these hardy children of toil are, and somewhat masculine of aspect, they nevertheless possess the acutest feelings and the strongest affections. Those who have witnessed their expressions of anguish when their husbands or brothers have perished in pursuing their perilous occupation, must have beheld scenes never to be effaced from the mind, scenes which indeed defy all description. The tearless eye, the rocking motion of the body, the hard wringing of the hands, and the occasional wild burst of lamentation, express, in a manner rarely witnessed among other classes of society, the overwhelming emotions which have been roused in bosoms falsely supposed to be destitute of feeling.

We trust the day is not far distant when this peculiar people will cease to perform the functions of beasts of burden. No great improvement can take place amongst them so long as they are subjected to their present slavish drudgery. They are so much absent from their homes, that their families all run to waste; and it but too often happens, that, to lighten their severe labours, they indulge in dram-drinking. A few light spring carts could be used to carry to market the enormous loads which they now bear—which, moreover, could be done in half the time, and at half the present expense. Nothing, indeed, can more forcibly demonstrate the inveterate power of custom than that the system now in use should have remained so long unchanged. But the cause is evident. No other class of the community has continued in such a state of ignorance. As education makes its way amongst them, all this will be changed.

MAHMOUD AND HIS REFORMS.

[In our 204th number we presented a short account of the principal improvements lately effected by Sultan Mahmoud in Turkey. The following observations, which we quote from a work recommended in our last number, "A Guide to the Danube and Constantinople," are upon the same subject, but more minute in the detail.]

THE Sultan Mahmoud is the son of Abdul Hamid, and the only survivor of a very numerous family of brothers and sisters. As vicar and successor of the Great Prophet, he unites in himself all the supreme executive and legislative powers. He was born on the 20th of July 1783, and ascended the throne on the 26th of July 1808. He is a fine, strong, robust-looking personage, about the middle stature, particularly wide across the shoulders and chest, of a dark swarthy complexion, with a long black beard (worn by him as head of the church) and mustachios.

Elated with his success in the destruction of the Janissaries, Mahmoud at once resolved to strike a blow at another excrecence, and with that view ordered the Mufti and Ouelnas to lay aside their clerical turbans, and substitute the ordinary red skull-cap; at the same time making law for the hereditary descent of property. These things, especially the former of them, may appear to be of little consequence; but their object being to amalgamate this proud and powerful class with the general mass of the people, they were of the utmost importance, and would have hurled any of Mahmoud's predecessors from the throne.

From this period the Sultan appears to have entered upon a new career; drilling his recruits, and being drilled himself, he underwent more fatigue in six months than he had been subjected to throughout the whole of his former life. He persevered amidst all the difficulties he had to encounter, until he could ride upon an English saddle, and put a regiment through its evolutions, as well as a European field-marshall could do. Cruelties became less frequent, and the value of human life increased.

But, after all, it is not to be forgotten that Mahmoud is still a Turk; he has been brought up in all the dogmas of Moslemism, and this being considered, we cannot but be surprised at the strength of mind and resoluteness of purpose he has displayed in carrying into effect reforms, and founding measures and institutions so opposed to Mahomedan prejudices, and so at variance with the laws of the Koran, as he has done.

As a father, Mahmoud evinces the utmost solicitude for his children. Two of his daughters are married to pashas, whose male issue are no longer to be put out of existence, nor are the princesses themselves to be forced out of the city, as was formerly the custom. His two sons, Sultan Abdul Medjid Effendi, and Sultan Abdul Aziz Effendi, the one in his twelfth year, the other a year younger, have the advantage of more athletic exercises, and of more intercourse with others, than have hitherto been permitted to princes of the blood. They are no longer confined to the seraglio, although Mahmoud knows that as they advance in years, the tenure of his own life becomes more precarious.

These, and various other innovations upon long established usages, have tended much to ameliorate the condition of the people, and to assimilate their

customs and institutions to those of the more civilised nations of the earth.

At the commencement of hostilities with the Russians, in 1828, a body of his new cavalry having surprised and taken an advanced post of about 400 men, cut off their ears, and sent them as trophies to the capital. The sultan, instead of exhibiting the satisfaction usually evinced on such occasions, reprobated the custom, in terms of severity, insisted upon its disuse, and gave orders that in future no prisoners should be maltreated, but that all should be conducted in safety to Constantinople. This was a bold, as well as an enlightened and humane step; it went to the very root of Moslem prejudice, since Mahomet had declared the captive of the sword to be the property of the captor.

Formerly, Christian subjects—by which are meant Armenians and Greeks—if ever seen at the departure of Turkish soldiers to the camp, were deemed to be ominous of evil, and if on horseback, they were obliged to dismount, and stand aside until the green banner had passed, none daring, at the peril of their lives, to be seen on the spot when the banner of the Great Prophet was unfurled; nor were they permitted to look up at the sultan. Now, they are not only permitted, but invited to be present upon such occasions: they may look at the Oslamini chief with impunity; and, in his absence, even set their "infidel" feet in his sacred tent. None dare offer them the slightest insult, without incurring the severest chastisement.

All religions are now tolerated, and three years since, the Armenians obtained a piece of ground for the building of a church, which has been erected at an expense of £36,000.

Architecture has received great encouragement, and the barracks, which are generally beyond the limits of the city, might be taken as models for more refined countries. The arsenal, the royal mosque, and several of the palaces—one of stone, and quite European in its style—have all been erected by the present sultan.

Extensive manufactories of guns, caps, leather, cloth, cannon, silk, &c., conducted principally by foreigners, have sprung up within the last five years; but they are all government monopolies. Carriages were never patronised by the successors of the Prophet, before his present representative ascended the throne. About two years since, Mahmoud introduced a small English phaeton, in which he drives four horses remarkably well. Roads, however, are still much wanted, although this is a matter that has not escaped the sultan's attention. He has made a new one from Scutari to Isnikmid, a distance of about sixty miles, upon which are established post-houses and other conveniences.

The use of knives and forks is becoming general; and, what is unheard of in the annals of Turkey, ambassadors and Christian chiefs are invited to dine at the palace, where the sultan, although he does not condescend to eat with them, freely converses, and partakes of the champagne, which his conscience-keepers are said to have discovered to possess none of the elements that constitute the reprobated beverage, but to rank more properly under the order of sherbet or lemonade, than of wine.

Orders and medals reward merit, a quality which now more generally raises men to fill important posts, than the gross intrigues that formerly led to that selection. The power of pashas, which formerly extended over the lives of all under their dominion, has become more limited. Sentence of death must be signed by the proper authorities, and sufficient time be allowed for appeal.

Formerly, all property belonging to persons employed by the government reverted to the Porte at their death, and the possession by such persons of any amount of wealth, was held to be sufficient justification of sacrificing their lives, to increase the public funds. Mahmoud, much to his honour, waived this privilege, and in full divan, where he generally presides, made a law for the hereditary descent and secure possession of property.

Notwithstanding that all pictures representing the human form, or any living creature, as well as music, are forbidden in the Koran, a triumph over these two obstacles to civilisation has been effected. The young princes have been painted in miniature by an Italian artist, and the sultan's portrait has been painted in oil, and placed in the arsenal. It is also lithographed, and sold in the city, and is the only thing of the kind to be seen. The "concord of sweet sounds," too, is now often heard,

Coming o'er the ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

It was formerly the custom, when any great personage received a visit, to have presented to him a pipe and coffee, by four kneeling slaves, who also perfumed his beard; but this practice having been denounced at court, has almost wholly fallen into disuse.

Harem are no longer state prisons; the fair inmates are allowed to walk out at pleasure, and to adorn themselves with jewellery. On the marriage of the Sultan's daughter with Ali Pasha, Mahmoud pledged himself that the male issue should no longer be destroyed, and that the princess should not be forced to leave the capital after three years, as had previously been the barbarous custom.

The mosques are ordered to be shown to strangers, when not occupied for prayer. The press, though it at present gives but a feeble light, has begun to shed its benign influence around; and a weekly gazette, in four languages, awakens the curiosity of the people.

Some time since, the sultan announced his intention of establishing steam-boats between the different parts of his dominions, and of visiting the several places himself, in the course of this summer. The announcement spread dismay amongst the sticklers for old customs. The shadow of God leave the city and its environs! Verily, the end draweth nigh!

STORIES AND CHARACTERS, FROM THE CHRONICLES OF SAUNDERS MUIRHEAD.

[We give the appellation of *The Chronicles of Saunders Muirhead* to a volume of country fire-side gossipries, actually written by a rustic and unlettered man, and which has been put into our hands, in order that we may give some extracts from it to the public. The language of the following and subsequent specimens of Saunders's labours is, with scarcely any modification, that employed by the writer; and in its simplicity, we believe, will consist no small part of the enjoyment which, it is to be hoped, our readers will derive from this attempt to cater for their amusement.]

THE PORRIDGE BICKER.

PETER PROUDFOOT possessed a small farm in the upper part of Annandale, which had been held by his father and grandfather before him. He was not very fond of farm work, but, in other respects, he was a bustling active little man, an excellent judge of cattle, and particularly good at making a bargain. He used to spend the summer and harvest in buying young cattle all over the country, which he sold again at the Dumfries markets. In his nature, he was somewhat jocular, and took particular delight in playing little harmless tricks on those who were his most intimate cronies. There was a near neighbour of his, named John Johnston, whom he used to annoy continually with one piece of wagery or another. Once after John had some trifling trick played upon him, he chanced to be passing Peter's dwelling early on a winter morning, and his road running close by the end of the farm-house, he saw a large bicker of porridge, designed for the family breakfast, set on the top of the garden dyke to cool. Looking about, and seeing no person out of doors, now, thought he, I'll play Peter a pliskie. He was riding at the time on a little grey pony, which he pushed close to the side of the dyke, and, taking the bicker and porridge before him on the saddle, he covered all over with the plaid which he had about him, and rode off, without either Peter or any of his people seeing him.

Now, I must tell you that there was a widow woman named Janet Telfer, who lived about a mile before him, and on the very road he was going. She had a family of small children, and was in very straitened circumstances. Janet was a regular Scots worthy in her way. Although she had been for some years in great poverty, and had no little difficulty in maintaining her family, yet she made a good struggle to keep off the parish. She would not have been so mean as to seek a bawbee from the kirk—no, not if she and her bairns had been starving outright. So, to this honest woman's door John Johnston rode straight with his pony, and giving a loud whistle, she came running to see what was wanted. "Here, Janet," said he, "is a bicker of porridge; give them to the bairns for their breakfast." "Bless me! John Johnston," said she, "how came you to bring porridge here?" "Hoot, hoot," said he, "never mind: I thought the weans would be hungry." "Indeed," replied Janet, "they are hungry enough, and I had naething to give them; there is not an ounce of meal within the door. Tam Shaw promised to bring me a little yesterday, but he did not come, and I have begged and borrowed wee pickles frae the neighbours, till I think shame to ask ony mair. But how did you ken that I was in such a strait?" "I kenn'd that weel enough," said John; "sae, say nae mair, but sup the porridge," and away he rode.

Janet had some salt butter in the house; so, putting a piece of it in the porridge, she and the children emptied the bicker, which was as much as they could do. When they had done, she returned thanks to God for his goodness in sending them so unexpected a meal; resolving to trust in him still with a stronger confidence than ever. She then took her threadbare blue cloak about her, and went down to Peter Proudfoot's with some yarn she had been spinning to his wife. When she had delivered the yarn, Mrs Proudfoot began to tell her what a strange thing had hap-

pened—how they had lost their porridge from off the garden wall. "I would not have cared for the porridge," said she, "but I am vexed for the good dish." "Oh, I can tell you," said Janet, "the dish is safe enough." She then related how John Johnston brought the bicker to her full of porridge, and the strait she was in when he came. Peter, who was present, laughed very heartily at the story. "I give him great credit," said he, "for the trick he has played us; many a one I have played on him, and I may play him some more yet. I am glad it came into his head to give them to you, when you were in so much need; you shall have as much meat to take home with you as will serve you for a week to come, and ye may send aye o' the hairs back wi' the bicker."

When Janet returned home, she found Tam Shaw standing at the door with what he promised to bring, and when John Johnston got home in the evening, he sent her both meat and potatoes, and Peter Proudfoot and he took the biggest of her children to herd their cows, till they grew up; and their wives contrived to give Janet constant work between them, so that she never wanted again; and she often said that the day on which John Johnston brought her the porridge, was one of the most lucky days of her life.

The story was afterwards commemorated in rhyme by a country poet, in the following lines:—

When thou, my friend, good honest John,
Bare off the bicker from the stone,
Then meant it only for a trick,
But Providence did thee direct
To take it to the widow poor,
Who had no meal within her door;
Thus, Iff who bears the ravens ery,
Did by thy hand send her supply,
And that same day she got good store,
And ne'er knew hunger any more.

The following tale is of a different cast, but I had it from a sure hand, and every word of it is a truth:—

MARY TWEEDIE.

A good number of years ago there was a farmer in the vale of Gala Water, named David Tweedie, who had a daughter whose name was Mary. This young woman, when she was about twenty-two years of age, one day took suddenly ill, and to all appearance died. Of course the lamentations of the family were great, but that could do no good, and therefore every preparation was made for the funeral. On the evening of the second day after this melancholy disaster, the coffin was to be brought. Among others of the neighbours who came to attend the ceremony of the chesting, there was a William Ramsay, a farmer's son in the near neighbourhood. William was just two years older than Mary, and for two or three years before had been her professed admirer. When he entered the house on this mournful occasion, he found only a neighbour woman, along with Mary's mother. They were sitting at the fire-side, for the day was very cold. When he sat down, the woman rose, and, saying she could not stop any longer, went away. Some few words having passed between William and Mary's mother, they both sunk into silence; but in a little they were startled with a noise in the bed where the corpse was lying. William went forward, and put aside a sheet that was hanging on the foreside of the bed, when, to his terror and surprise, Mary was actually sitting up. Her mother no sooner saw this, than she fainted quite away. William, however, was all activity and life. He ran and fetched a pair of blankets from another bed, which he wrapped around her, that she might not see herself in the dead-clothes, till they got her brought something round. He then freed her face, and taking her by the hand, spoke kindly to her, and desired her to lie down.

All this while Mary seemed like one coming out of a strange dream, and, recognising William, said, "Dear sake, William, is this you? what has been the matter with me? I am starving of cold. I thought I was lying in some dark and ugly place, and now you are come to relieve me. I'll never forget your goodness." In a short time her father coming in, William ran to him, and in whispers told him what had happened, requesting him to make no noise. The old man had so far the command of himself that he said nothing at the time; he only took off his bonnet, and, raising his eyes to heaven, passed a minute or two in ejaculations of prayer or thanksgiving. The mother, by this time, was come a little to herself, and her they also got to keep quiet. William next proposed that blankets should be warmed to lay upon the revived invalid, and that bottles of warm water should be applied to her feet. All this was accordingly done as soon as possible. Mary had a sister two years older than herself, and she went into the bed beside her, to try to bring her to some heat. Warm cordials were made ready and given by little and little at a time, and in about two hours she was quite warm and almost well again. They unfortunately could not get the grave-clothes stripped off till they were obliged to tell her every thing, which affected her greatly, but yet not so much as they thought it would have done. "How near," said she, "I have been to the grave! Let me never forget God's goodness in bringing me not only from the jaws of death, but, I may say, from death itself." When bedtime came, the family were think-

ing who would sit up with her all night. William Ramsay, who was still there, proposed that he should sit for one, and he told his mother, who was there also, not to expect him home that night.

I need hardly tell you that the word soon went over all the neighbourhood that Mary Tweedie was come to life again, and the people from all quarters came pouring in till a late hour to see her. It was, however, thought best not to harass her at the time, nor speak much to her. Some looked at her from a little distance, as she was lying on the bed, and some contented themselves with talking a little to her father or mother. In a few days she was quite well again, and from that time forward William Ramsay paid more attention to her than ever, and in about two years afterwards they were married, and lived many years happily together. She bore a family of fine children, and made a most excellent wife and mother. But she was always sober and sedate; she scarcely ever laughed; was never angry; but, amidst all the vicissitudes of life, lived piously and peacefully, and died at last at a very advanced age.

THE MAN WHO KNEW EVERY BODY.

SOME few summers ago, I spent several weeks at a pretty little watering-place, in one of the southern counties of Scotland. The village, during the period of my stay, was filled with visitors of all classes and descriptions. Numbers of real or imaginary invalids from among the wealthier orders of society were spending at the spot their usual term of country residence, while many of a humbler rank were seeking relief from true illness by the use of the medicinal springs in the neighbourhood. Amongst all these various residents, for the time being, a perfect equality reigned, and, indeed, this was in a measure inevitable, seeing that there was no alternative between absolute solitude, and the adoption of such companions as chance was pleased to bring in the way.

Those who lodged in the inn of the village, in particular, being chiefly young men, like myself, who had come to while away a week or two in fishing and other amusements, were brought into daily and hourly fellowship, having to breakfast, dine, and sup, at a common table, and, in short, enjoying nothing individually and undividedly but their bedrooms. For my part I enjoyed this fortuitous associate-ship very much, for the three or four weeks of my residence in the village. A great part of this enjoyment was owing to one individual, the only person among my co-lodgers who had any thing remarkable about him; the rest being idle, gentlemanly young fellows of an ordinary cast. Not that I mean to insinuate that the individual particularised was not as idle and gentlemanly as any of them; only, he was not an "ordinary" personage, and there lay the distinction. The first extraordinary thing about him was, that nobody knew his name, or who and what he was, though he knew every body, and all about every body. He was generally termed "Mr S." or the "gentleman with the whiskers," his visage being decorated with an ample pair of these appendages. The chamber-maid it was, I believe, who gave us this initial glimpse at his name, having observed the letters J. S. on his portmanteau. Gentle in his person, courteous, even to excess, in his manners, and scrupulously neat, if not elegant, in his attire, Mr S. was calculated, at first sight, to excite a prepossession in his favour; and on further intercourse with him, this impression certainly had no tendency to decrease. Of the every-day small talk of society, he was a first-rate master; he abounded in anecdote of the most pleasing conversational kind, his stories generally relating to living persons of note and rank in the world: and what was best of all about the good things he told, he almost uniformly gave you them at first hand, exactly as they had fallen from the lips of the parties concerned, in his presence. No common-place culler and retailer of fifty times told and written bon-mots was the "gentleman with the whiskers." Every thing that came from his mouth bore the stamp of freshness and novelty. You could not mention one man's name, but Mr S. would tell you something about him you never heard before.

The reader must have a touch of S.'s vein, in order to comprehend the mysterious curiosity respecting him that gradually crept over my mind while I lived beside him. This curiosity, as has been already said, none of the rest of our watering-place companions could gratify. He was unknown to all; though, strange to tell, several of them were at times firm in the belief that they had seen him somewhere before—but where or when, they puzzled their brains in vain to recollect. Over my own mind a glimmering feeling of the same kind occasionally came, and ended in the like dark uncertainty. The general impression among

us came to be, that Mr S. was a man of consequence, who found it convenient, from some temporary pecuniary difficulty, to keep himself and his whereabouts quiet for a short while. How could we think otherwise, when we found a man capable of describing accurately, from personal observation, the appearance, dress, and manners of every peer and gentleman of note in the country? Suppose the subject of the turf and its heroes to be started by our little club of diners at the ordinary, out came S. with his observation— "Odd lengths keen sportsmen do sometimes go, to be sure, with their passion for racing and betting. Some men, from morning till night, seem to think of nothing else; and though one would say that they could not carry on turf-sports and dine at the same time, yet I have actually known it done. I once heard Lord K. offer a heavy wager at dinner, that he would leap his famous hunter Rozinante over a chair back, directly in the face of a rousing fire. The bet was taken on the spot, and the stakes tabled. The horse was brought into the dining-room in a few minutes afterwards, and the chair placed, according to agreement, at the distance of a certain number of feet from the fire. His lordship mounted, and in another instant the docile animal had cleared the chair, and stood stock-still within a few inches of the blaze." After some length kept sportsmen do sometimes go, to be sure, with their passion for racing and betting. Some men, from morning till night, seem to think of nothing else; and though one would say that they could not carry on turf-sports and dine at the same time, yet I have actually known it done. I once heard Lord K. offer a heavy wager at dinner, that he would leap his famous hunter Rozinante over a chair back, directly in the face of a rousing fire. The bet was taken on the spot, and the stakes tabled. 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I can't get down!" The sooty-men explored the chimney, and declared that the man was gone. A repetition of the "I can't get down" belied their words, and the landlord was on the point of sending for masons to break into the vent, when, to the astonishment of all, including the ventriloquist's patrons, who were completely taken by surprise as well as the others, the dexterous joggler revealed the deception. He had imitated the crying of a person from the chimney, and no one had noticed the deception.

After spending a week or two in daily listening to such anecdotes as those that have been related, my desire—and I believe it was participated in by many others—to know who Mr S. really was, knew no bounds. From his stories, one sometimes would have imagined him to be a peer, sometimes a sporting squire, sometimes a lawyer, a merchant, a physician, or a daily associate, at least, of one or other of these classes of the community. Sometimes I imagined the mystic being might be a member of our senate, but, seeing that half-a-dozen at least of M. P.'s bore the same initials, I was here as much at a loss as ever.

The appointed term of my stay in the little watering-place approached, and I was wretched. Had it not been for the medicinal waters which I drank every morning, I must have fallen into a "curious" consumption. The man with the whiskers—he of the initials—J. S.—had made me miserable. He was as courteous, as much admired, and as anecdotal as ever. One day, however, while half a dozen of us were sitting at the ordinary, and just as I was thinking of announcing my departure on an early day, one of the party who had taken up a newspaper remarked that visitors had at last begun to return from the country to town, and read a long list of arrivals, including many of the nobility, at the National Hotel. For the first time, as this list was read, I saw emotion depicted on the usually unperturbed countenance of the mysterious S.—that countenance which I had so long watched with absorbing interest. "An attachment," was my immediate thought, "to some lady named in the list of arrivals." As soon as I could, I got the paper into my hands, and instantly looked at the arrivals. The celebrated beauties, the Hon. Misses A., were among the number. "Poor J. S., or happy J. S., as it may be, has an attachment to one of them, it is quite clear," was my cogitation, and it was confirmed by his announcement, shortly after, of his intention to return to town by next day's coach. Doubtless the ardour of his passion induced him to fly to his love without delay. More deeply interested in my friend of the initials than ever, I quickly formed and made known my resolve to depart by the same conveyance.

After I had taken my seat, at an early hour next morning, on the top of the coach, J. S. made his appearance, but, to my great surprise, his cheeks were as red as my hand. His whiskers were completely gone. As I was ruminating on the cause of this, S. jumped up beside me on the coach, and every thing was nearly ready for the start, when one of our companions of the ordinary, of whom we had taken leave on the preceding night, came to the door of the inn, and looking up to us, was about, as I thought, to say "good bye," but, instead of that, he fixed his eyes on my companion's unwhiskered countenance with a look of amazement, gave a slap to his leg, and cried, "I have him at last! it's the—." Ya hip! cried the coachman; off dashed the horses, rattle went the wheels, and what the gentleman was about to say was drowned in the commingled noise. But it was not altogether lost upon me. I saw that the speaker so untimely interrupted had at last discovered, by the denudation of his cheeks, who J. S. really was. What would I not have given for one moment's delay of that coach's career! As it was, I had learned something. The last word which I had heard—the—the—indicated that J. S. was no common man. He had a title. People talk of the Viscount, the Lord Advocate, the Lord Provost, but no man in an ordinary situation of life, no lawyer, or merchant, can be distinctively pointed out by the prefixure of the definite article the. The gentleman with the initials must unquestionably be a man of no mean distinction.

With this impression on my mind, I confess I almost insensibly heightened the respectfulness of my tone in addressing my coach companion as we bowled along the road, and it seemed to me that he also became more respectful, while there was a pensive reserve about him also, which I attributed to his meditation, poor fellow, upon one of the Hon. Misses A. As we were driving along, dying with curiosity as I was, I did not like to offer an exchange of cards, which would be next to asking his name, a thing he seemed desirous to keep secret. The end of our journey approached, and I thought internally, with a bitter sigh, that it must be left to some future chance to unfold this mystery. The coach reached Edinburgh. Before it came to what is called its stand, the mysterious bearer of the initials jumped off. He touched his hat, and bade me good-bye. My heart sunk within me, with vexation and disappointment. As a last resource, having observed S. to speak in a familiar whisper to the coachman, it struck me to ask the latter if he knew the gentleman who had left us. Coachman was a sort of half Cockney. "Vy," says the handler of the whip, "I knows him very well. It's Joe Swipes, as is the waiter at the National. A rum fellow he is, and no mistake. I'll warrant now he's been a'-playing the gen'leman somewere, wile the 'ome is slack. And a

right good gen'leman he makes. I never heard such stories as Joe can pump out. But visker-time's over, as we says, wot knows him—the gentry's a'-coming in, and he must look sharp a'-ter busness now!"

Waiter or lord, Joe Swipes was a gentleman.

ANECDOTES OF THE ORIGINS OF WORDS.

ONE of the most remarkable words, as far as origin is concerned, in the English tongue, is *assassin*. In the era of the crusades, this term was introduced into the languages of Europe, being derived from a tribe of murderous fanatics, who infested Asia for several centuries, and who were under the command of a chief, commonly styled the Old Man of the Mountain. To this chief, his followers, deceived into the hope of thereby gaining paradise, paid implicit obedience, recklessly sacrificing their own lives in the execution of his orders, which were almost uniformly death-warrants. This terrible sect, according to some authors, derived their appellation of assassins from Hassan their founder, and, according to others, from *hashish*, a narcotic herb, which they sometimes substituted for the dagger, in compassing the destruction of their victims. More than one of the crusading princes fell beneath the far-extended arm of the old monster of the mountain—for man such a being merits not to be called. And this is the worthy source of our synonyme for a secret murderer.

The very common word *calculation* is to be referred to a curious origin. *Calculus*, the Latin root from which the word is derived, signifies a *stone*, or pebble, and, indeed, is Anglicised in this sense, when applied to designate urinary concretions. The connection between a stone and arithmetical computation, is not very clear, but a glance at old customs explains the matter. In the few simple calculations which they had occasion to make, the Romans were obliged to have recourse to a sort of mechanical process, employing pebbles or counters. Boys were taught this humble art at school, and carried with them, as instruments of computation, a box filled with pebbles, and a board on which these were placed in rows. A table, also, strewed with fine sand, served both for tracing geometrical diagrams, and teaching the elements of writing; a very primitive contrivance, but universally used throughout the East, even at this day. From these connections of stones or pebbles and sand with computation, came the word *calculation*. Another word in every-day use with us, namely, *candidacy*, had a similar origin in the customs of the Roman people, and has been preserved, though the custom, as in the former case, has been long disused. The root is *candidus*, an adjective signifying *white*, and competitors for offices in Rome were called by the derivative term *candidates*, because they were obliged to wear gowns or robes of that colour when going round the city, soliciting the votes of the people. The congenial term *canvassing* has an origin not less curious. The word *canvass*, now employed, in one acceptation, to denote woven cloth, at one time signified merely hemp, of which canvass-cloth originally was made. Now, the act of preparing or beating hemp for its further uses, was a most laborious employment, the stuff having to be sifted and thoroughly examined by the workers. Hence the term "to canvass," came figuratively to signify "to sift out or search into," and in this light was applied to the debating or discussing of questions. By carrying the figure still further, canvassing was used to denote the examination made by candidates for an office into their chance of success, and, as solicitation generally accompanied such inquiries, the meaning of "canvassing" ultimately came to be "the begging of votes." What a strange gradation of meanings from the beating of hemp! While we are upon this subject of canvassing and candidates, we may notice a word which may, perhaps, be regarded as the true root of both—*ambition*. With all the high and lofty, though sometimes dark and dangerous meanings, which we now attach to the term *ambition*, it originally signified simply "going about," and acquired its present signification in the course of time, from the fact that men of an aspiring spirit were those who "went about" most frequently among the Roman people, seeking their suffrages and courting their favour. Our English word "ambient" still represents the original meaning of *ambition*.

Few words have so remarkable a history as the familiar word *bankrupt*. The money-changers of Italy had, it is said, benches or stalls, in the bourse or exchange in former times, and at these they conducted their ordinary business. When any of them fell back in the world, and became insolvent, his bench was broken, and the name of broken-bench, or *bancu*

rotto, was given to him. When the word was first adopted into the English, it was nearer the Italian than it now is, being "bankerout," instead of bankrupt.

The term *crescent*, as applied by us to streets, and other things of a certain form, is a curious instance of the acquisition of an entirely new meaning by progressive removals from the original sense. *Crescent* (*crescens*) is an adjective signifying "increasing," and in this sense it was employed to designate the moon in her first quarter—the crescent moon. By and bye, however, the word was deprived of its original signification of increase, and was made to refer to the *shape* of the moon in her early period. By further metaphorical licence, it was applied to every thing that bore a *quartolunar* form, and now all trace of its primitive meaning is gone. A similar fate has befallen the word *villain*. At first this term signified a countryman or peasant (*villanus*, from *villa*, a country abode); in former times, that class was held by the great as low-born serfs; from this, villain came to have the signification of a mean, base fellow; and, finally, we find it bearing the sense of scoundrel, and every thing, in short, that is bad in morals, whether in town or in country, in high or in low life.

The next two words whose origin we shall allude to, are *bachelor* and *girl*, the first of which, being formerly held as synonymous with "young man" or "sweet-heart," may be regarded as the parallel and corresponding term to the other. We hope that the classes which bear these two names will pardon us for saying, that etymology gives a not very flattering account of the origin of either. As for *girl*, we are left, as far as respects its derivation, to choose between the Saxon *carl* or *churl*, and the Latin word *garula*, a garrulous female. If the latter of these derivations be the right one, shall we say in this case, as in some of the preceding, that the term *girl* has departed much from its original signification? At all events, we are certain that the parties denoted by the term will prefer the appellation of (sweet) *prattlers* to that of *carls* or *churls*, *burly* and *surly*. As for *bachelors*, etymology is still less kind, and still less decisive, with respect to the meaning of their distinctive designation. One philologist refers the term to a Greek word, plainly and plumply signifying *foolish*, while another derives it from *bas chevalier* (French), a knight of the very meanest grade. By some, the word is traced to the Latin *baeculus* (a staff), because bachelors in their old days have nothing but a stick or cane to lean upon; and, last *and* least, the worthy commentator and improver upon Johnson, Mr H. P. Todd, believes "the most probable derivation to be from *baeca laurus*, the berry of a laurel or bay; bachelors being young, and of good hopes, like laurels in the berry." Truly this latter is even too hard a nut to crack, and we had rather the tree in question had been the chestnut or hazel. To speak the truth, in plain earnest, the French derivation of *bas chevalier* seems to be the true original of *bachelor*; and all, therefore, who expose themselves to the designation by remaining obstinately in a single state, must be content to rank themselves under the primitive appellation of "knights of the lowest order." The parties implicated, it is to be presumed, will shelter themselves under the plea that a great change has taken place in the meaning of words; and as this is the argument we ourselves set out with, why, we cannot very well gainsay the defence.

The word *academy* is derived from a strange source. A private and obscure person in Athens, called *Academus*, was possessed of a house, which, at his death, became a school, and in its gardens the illustrious Plato filled the ears of his pupils with wise and eloquent discourse. "See there," says Milton,

"See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement."

The house of "Academus" being the school of so famous a teacher, other teachers also, though no *Platos*, would have their petty seminaries called "groves of Academe," until by degrees the word came to be applied in this sense universally, and its original derivation from the name of honest Mr *Academus*, citizen of Athens, was entirely forgotten. Somewhat akin to this is the still prevalent application of the term *hedge-school*, in Ireland, to small country-school-houses, built of good solid stone and lime. The primitive fashion once followed by the pedagogues in that country, of teaching under *hedges*, with no covering above them, or at most only a few turfs, gave rise to the term. Now-a-days, however, it is not the character of the place of teaching that keeps up the name of hedge-school, but the character of the schoolmaster. The ancient mode of instruction in Ireland had, at least, the example of *Plato* in its favour, that philosopher being fond, as we have seen, of delivering his lessons in groves, under the open canopy of heaven.

Talking of the "canopy" of heaven, by the bye, puts us in mind that that same word *canopy* is traceable to an odd origin. Few words have so fine and lofty a sound as canopy, associated as it is in our minds with the celestial vault above us—more, perhaps, from *Shakspeare's* noble use of it than from any other reason; "this most excellent canopy, the air—look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with gold." And what does this harmonious, lofty-sounding word canopy come from? Why, from a *gnat*, a paltry fly, a troublesome, noxious varmint of an insect. *Conopis*, in the Greek tongue, signifies a gnat, and *Conopis* a "net that hangeth about beds to keep away gnats." The Latines,

when they got hold of this term, made it Canopeum, and applied it to a testern, or any covering "hung over beds." In process of time, the sense of the word was enlarged, and it was used to designate the roof of a tent or pavilion. At the present time, the signification of the word canopy may be justly defined to be "any thing that hangs over any thing." We have seen it alleged, that the irruption of the barbarous tribes of Northern Asia into Europe was caused by the bite of a gnat. One of these insects, says our authority, chanced to fix itself on the back of a wild bull; off went the animal frantically, with its tail horizontalised, as soon as it felt the bite; a party of savage Asiatic hunters pursued it; mile after mile, league after league, the chase continued, without a pause on the part of the pursuers, and as little on the part of the bull, for the gnat kept its position, and bit and sucked on, till at last the brute fell dead from exhaustion, and the hunters, on looking around them, found that they had been led into a new and rich land, of the existence of which they had never dreamed before. They went back to their native wilderness, and told the tale of what they had seen. Others came to see too; encroachment after encroachment followed; and ultimately the whole civilised world fell before these children of the wilds. Such were the magnificent consequences arising from the bite of a gnat.

Though any man can put his pony or his roadster to the *canter*, few are able, in general, to explain the word by which they designate the animal's pace. The term *canter* is a corruption, or rather an abbreviation, of a Canterbury gallop, which signifies the hand-gallop of an ambling horse. The origin of the phrase is as old as the days of the Canterbury pilgrimages, when votaries came at certain seasons to the shrine of Thomas-a-Becket in that city, from all parts of the nation. Mail-coaches and rail-roads being then unknown, the pilgrims travelled on horseback, and, from their using generally easy ambling nags, the pace at which they got over the ground came to be called "a Canterbury gallop," and afterwards "a canter."

Antimony is another word, the etymology of which could never be guessed from the thing itself. It is, as every one knows, a certain kind of metal. Its name is derived from the French word *antimoine*, a monk-hater—or, to explain it properly, an *against-a-monk*. This remarkable appellation arose from the doings of a German abbot, by name Basil Valentine, who, as the tradition relates, having thrown some of the oxidised mineral to the hogs, observed, that, after it had purged them heartily, they immediately fattened. *Therefore* (says the story) he imagined his fellow monks would grow all the sleeker from a like dose. The experiment, however, succeeded so ill, that they all died of it; and the mineral was thenceforward called *antimoine*, *antimonk*, or *antimony*.

Our space will only permit us at present to advert to one other example of odd etymology. The word *dyer* is familiar to Scottish ears as the appellation for a debtor or defaulter. It arose from the circumstance, that, in Scotland, debtors were at one time compelled to stand in the streets, in a public place, arrayed in a patched garment made up of cloth of divers colours. This station they were forced to maintain for several hours a-day, and during several days; nor were they permitted to appear in the streets, in their own clothes, for all that time. Hence, from their robe of *dyers* or divers colours, they came to be called *dyers* or *dyvours*.

JEFFREY HUDSON.

JEFFREY HUDSON, the amusing dwarf, who cuts so conspicuous a figure in *Peveril of the Peak*, was born at Oakham, in Rutlandshire, in 1619, and in after life greatly contributed to the amusements of the courts of Charles I. and II. On the occasion of a battle between him and a turkey-cook, Sir William Davenant wrote a poem, which he called "Jefferidos;" and in 1638, was published a small book, under the title of "The New Year's Gift, presented at court by the Lady Pavula to the Lord Minimus, commonly called Little Jeffrey, written by Moprophilus;" to which was annexed the dwarf's portrait. As much notice was then taken of the little fellow, he began to fancy himself of vast importance, and indulged his conceit to such an extent, that he took umbrage at the conduct of William Evans, the king's gigantic porter, with whom, notwithstanding his "marvellous greatness," he had repeated bickerings. Dr Hudson, in the description of London, thus speaks of the little great personage:—"Jeffrey Hudson, when he was about seven or eight years old, was served up to table in a cold pie, on the Burleigh-hill, the seat of the Duke of Buckingham; and, as soon as he made his appearance, presented by the duchess to the queen, who retained him in her service. He was then but eighteen inches in height. In a masque at court, the gigantic porter drew him out of his pocket, to the surprise of all the courtiers. He is said not to have grown any taller till after thirty, when he shot up to three feet nine inches. Soon after the breaking out of the civil war, he was made captain in the royal army. In 1644, he attended the queen into France, where he had a quarrel with a gentleman named Crofts, whom he challenged. Mr Crofts came to the place of appointment armed only with a squirt! A real duel soon after ensued, in which the antagonists engaged on horseback, with pistols; Crofts was shot dead at the first fire. Jeffrey returned to England at the Restoration, and was afterwards confined to the Gate-house, Westminster, on sus-

picion of being concerned in the Popish plot. He died under confinement, in the sixty-third year of his age. In the Ashmolean Museum, at Oxford, are his waistcoat, breeches, and stockings; the former is of blue satin, slashed and ornamented with printed white silk; the two latter are of one piece of blue satin."

LABOUR AND EXERCISE.

In a useful treatise on the "Preservation of Health," by John Harrison Curtis, Esq., author of several excellent little works on the preservation of sight, hearing, &c., we find the following well-conceived observations on the subject of labour and exercise:—

"Manhood is the period which the condition of the body points out as that peculiarly adapted for labour; in which labour of a proper kind, and in moderation, so far from being an evil, and the necessity for it a curse, as it is commonly but ignorantly represented to be, is in reality indispensable (our constitution being such as it is) to the preservation of health and enjoyment. Well has the poet admonished those who take this false view of the subject, in the following lines:—

O mortal man! who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate:
That, like an emmet, thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date;
And certes there is for it reason great:
For though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that star, would come a heavier bale.
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

Castle of Indolence.

The exercise which our occupations afford, is, when they are of a healthy description, and not too long pursued, of the very best kind; inasmuch as it is one in which the mind as well as the body is engaged; and this harmony of mind and body I have already shown to be requisite for the full realisation of the benefits of exercise.

It is deeply to be lamented, that, notwithstanding the vast improvements that have of late years been effected in this respect, so many of the occupations of life are still destructive of human health and happiness. It is to be feared that many of the causes of these evils must long remain in operation, and that some of them are irremovable. But there can be no doubt that occupations are injurious, more by reason of the excessive length of the time of labour, than of any inherent unhealthy tendency; and that, if men generally were acquainted with the laws of the animal economy, and applied their knowledge to the counteraction of the morbid influences to which they are daily exposed, they would escape many of the miseries which they now endure. For example: How many young men are there in this city, who, being engaged in sedentary occupations the greater part of the day, in banking-houses, merchants' counting-houses, or lawyers' offices, imperatively need a considerable quantity of muscular exercise to preserve their bodies in health and strength, and who yet, in sheer ignorance, give up almost the only opportunity they have of taking such exercise; and instead of walking to and from their places of business, get into an omnibus, and ride, for the express purpose of avoiding a little fatigue: whereas their elder brethren, who have risen an hour before them, may be seen walking, and thereby availing themselves of the advantage of exercise. And many of these same persons, breathing during the whole day confined and impure air, emerge therefrom, and, with admirable sagacity, proceed straightway into the still more impure air of a theatre, or other crowded place!

If individuals of this class knew their own interests, they would fix their habitations at a short distance (two or three miles) from town; and they would regard an indispensable appendage to their dwellings a plot of garden-ground. These preliminaries arranged, they would be early risers; they would cultivate their gardens, and, whenever the state of the weather permitted, they would call in to their aid no other instruments of locomotion than those with which nature has furnished them. If such a plan as this were pursued, they would be able to resist the unhealthy influences to which they are in their daily pursuits exposed; and a blooming cheek and cheerful eye would be more common phenomena in the city of London than they are at present are.

And yet, though the persons composing this useful and respectable class are in general neglectful of exercise, there are every year not a few victims from among them to excessive muscular exertion. Most of them enjoy once a year a vacation of a few weeks—a resting from the cares and toils of business: and, as if to make up for their long confinement, many of these young persons determine to make the most of their short period of liberty, and set out on extensive pedestrian excursions. Ignorant or unmindful of the fact that the muscles, for want of due exercise, become weak and incapable of powerful action, and that, to be beneficial, it is necessary that exercise should be proportioned to the strength of the organ, their object is to accomplish the utmost of which their limbs are capable. Having heard that exercise is conducive to health, and knowing that, for the previous twelve months, they have had exceedingly little of it, they imagine their best plan is to take advantage of the present opportunity, and to lay up a stock of exercise for the twelve months to come. Unmindful of the monitions which their weary limbs afford, they march on to the end of their predetermined journey, and console themselves for the pain they suffer, by thinking that it is caused

by *exercise*, and that it will eventually promote their health. No opinion can be more mistaken: this excessive fatigue weakens the body to such a degree as often to produce permanent debility, and lay the foundations of fatal disease; nay, it is sometimes the direct cause of death—as it was in the following case cited by Dr Combe:—"A young gentleman was employed as a clerk in one of the banks in Edinburgh. He was closely confined to his desk during the summer, and towards the end of July had become weak and emaciated from deficient exercise in the open air. His strength continued to decline till the middle of August, when he went to shoot on Falkirk Moor. On Friday and Saturday he was much fatigued by excessive and unusual exertion, and on Sunday evening was feverish and heated, and perspired very much during the night." He was unable to return to business; and after passing three months in a feverish and sleepless condition, he died in the beginning of November. He was previously of a healthy constitution.

Now, all this mischief might have been prevented by attention to a very simple rule, which has already been enunciated in this book, but which I will here repeat—namely, never continue exercise after it has become *painful*. Our muscles, like the rest of our bodies, are made susceptible of pain, for the beneficial purpose that we may know that they are in danger, and may thus be excited to do every thing in our power to remove them from it. It is a mistaken notion that exercise of all kinds, and under all circumstances, is beneficial. Unless it is adapted to the condition of the muscles, it will prove the agent of death, not the give of health. As I have before remarked, exercise is most beneficial when in union with the mental state; and if amusement or business can be combined with it, the same amount of exercise will be far more useful that it were taken for the sake of the exercise alone. The effect of mental occupation in enabling persons to perform feats of strength, or to go through great muscular exertion, is matter of common observation."

IRVING'S ACCOUNT OF THE FREE TRAPPERS.

THE recital of the wild adventures of the American fur traders, given by Washington Irving in his "Astoria," has been followed up by an equally interesting account (3 vols., Bentley, London) of the "Adventure of Captain Bonneville," a singular personage, who, with a trusty band of trappers and others, penetrated a few years ago into the region of the Rocky Mountains, for the purpose of extending the American fur trade. Those who were pleased with the former production will not fail to be satisfied with the present, which contains a variety of new character and incident. We have introduced to us, for the first time, a new order of vagrants, half trader, half hunter, who have grown out of the system of exploratory journeys in the far west.

Formerly, the principal part of the company of trappers consisted of *voyageurs* or boatmen, and *courreurs des bois*. "A totally different class (says Mr Irving) has now sprung up, 'the Mountaineers,' traders and trappers, that scale the vast mountain chains, and pursue their hazardous vocations amidst their wild recesses. They move from place to place on horseback. The equestrian exercises, therefore, in which they are continually engaged; the nature of the countries they traverse; vast plains and mountains, pure and exhilarating in atmospheric qualities; seem to make them physically and mentally a more lively and mercurial race than the fur traders and trappers of former days, the self-vaulting 'men of the north.' A man who bestrides a horse, must be essentially different from a man who cowers in a canoe. We find them, accordingly, hardy, lithesome, and active; extravagant in word, and thought, and deed; heedless of hardship; daring of danger; prodigal of the present, and thoughtless of the future. Accustomed to live in tents, or to bivouac in the open air, he despises the comforts and is impatient of the comfort of the log-house. If his meal is not ready in season, he takes his rifle, hies to the forest or the prairie, shoots his own game, lights his fire, and cooks his repast. With his horse and his rifle, he is independent of the world, and spurns at all its restraints. The very superintendents at the lower posts will not put him to men with the common men, the hirelings of the establishment, but treat him as something superior."

There is, perhaps, no class of men on the face of the earth who lead a life of more continued exertion, peril, and excitement, and who are more enamoured of their occupations, than the free trappers of the west. No toil, no danger, no privation, can turn the trapper from his pursuit. His passionate excitement at times resembles a mania. In vain may the most vigilant and cruel savages beset his path; in vain may rocks and precipices, and wintry torrents, oppose his progress; let but a single track of a beaver meet his eye, and he forgets all dangers, and defies all difficulties.

At times he may be seen with his traps on his shoulder, buffeting his way across rapid streams, amidst floating blocks of ice: at other times he is to be found with his traps swung on his back, clambering the most rugged mountains, scaling or descending the most frightful precipices, searching, by routes inaccessible to the horse, and never before trodden by white man, for springs and lakes unknown to his comrades, and where he may meet with his favourite game. Such is the mountaineer, the hardy trapper

the west; and such, as we have slightly sketched, is the wild Robin Hood kind of life, with all its strange and motley populace, now existing in full vigour among the Rocky Mountains."

The author, at a subsequent part of the work, gives a lively account of the appearance of these roistering blades. "They come and go, when and where they please; provide their own horses, arms, and other equipments; trap and trade on their own account, and dispose of their skins and peltries to the highest bidder. Sometimes in a dangerous hunting ground, they attach themselves to the camp of some trader for protection.

The wandering whites who mingle for any length of time with the savages, have invariably a proneness to adopt savage habits, but none more so than the free trappers. It is a matter of vanity and ambition with them to discard every thing that may bear the stamp of civilised life, and to adopt the manners, habits, dress, gesture, and even walk of the Indian. You cannot pay a free trapper a greater compliment, than to persuade him you have mistaken him for an Indian brave; and, in truth, the counterfeit is complete. His hair, suffered to attain to a great length, is carefully combed out, and either left to fall carelessly over his shoulders, or plaited neatly and tied up in otter skins, or parti-coloured ribands. A hunting shirt of ruffled calico of bright dye, or of ornamented leather, falls to his knee; below which, curiously fashioned leggings, ornamented with strings, fringes, and a profusion of hawks' bells, reach to a costly pair of moccassins of the finest Indian fabric, richly embroidered with beads. A blanket of scarlet, or some other bright colour, hangs from his shoulders, and is girt round his waist with a red sash, in which he bestows his pistols, knife, and the stem of his Indian pipe; preparations either for peace or war. His gun is lavishly decorated with brass tacks and vermillion, and provided with a fringed cover, occasionally of buck-skin, ornamented here and there with a feather. His horse, the noble minister to the pride, pleasure, and profit of the mountaineer, is selected for his speed and spirit, and prancing carriage, and holds a place in his estimation, second only to himself. He shares largely of his bounty, and of his pride and pomp of trapping. He is caparisoned in the most dashing and fantastic style; the bridles and crupper are weightily embossed with beads and cockades; and head, mane, and tail, are interwoven with abundance of eagles' plumes, which flutter in the wind. To complete this grotesque equipment, the proud animal is bestreaked and bespotted with vermillion, or with white clay, which ever presents the most glaring contrast to his real colour.

Such is the account given by Captain Bonneville of these rangers of the wilderness, and their appearance at the camp was strikingly characteristic. They came dashing forward at full speed, firing their fuses, and yelling in Indian style. Their dark sunburnt faces, and long flowing hair, their leggings, flaps, moccassins, and gaudily dyed blankets, and their painted horses richly caparisoned, gave them so much the air and appearance of Indians, that it was difficult to persuade oneself that they were white men, and had been brought up in civilised life. Captain Bonneville was delighted with the game look of these cavaliers of the mountains, welcomed them heartily to his camp, and ordered a free allowance of grog to regale them, which soon put them in the most braggart spirits."

The following sketch of an encampment in a retreat among the mountains, recommended as a good wintering spot by some of Bonneville's Indian allies, finishes the picture of the free trapper. "They were now in a natural fastness of the mountains, the ingress and egress of which was by a deep gorge, so narrow, rugged, and difficult, as to prevent secret approach or rapid retreat, and to admit of easy defence. Captain Bonneville soon found that the Indians had not exaggerated the advantages of this region. Beside numerous gangs of elk, large flocks of the ashanta or bighorn, the mountain sheep were to be seen bounding among the precipices. These simple animals were easily circumvented and destroyed. A few hunters may surround a flock, and kill as many as they please. Numbers were daily brought into camp, and the flesh of those which were young and fat, was extolled as superior to the finest mutton. Here, then, there was a cessation from toil, from hunger, and alarm. Past ills and dangers were forgotten. The hunt, the game, the song, the story, the rough though good-humoured joke, made time pass joyously away, and plenty and security reigned throughout the camp."

While at this place, one of the free trappers applied to Kowsoter, an Indian chief, to seek him a wife from among his tribe, and the chief complying with the request, brings the lady who is to be so favoured, along with a band of her relations, to the trapper's lodge. The scene which ensued is described in Mr Irving's best manner. "The trapper received his new and numerous family connexions with proper solemnity; he placed his bride beside him, and, filling the pipe, the great symbol of peace, with his best tobacco, took two or three whiffs, then handed it to the chief, who transferred it to the father of the bride, from whence it was passed on from hand to hand and mouth to mouth of the whole circle of Indians round the fire, all maintaining the most profound and becoming silence. After several pipes had been filled and emptied in this solemn ceremonial, the chief addressed the bride; detailing, at considerable length, the duties of a wife; which, among Indians, are little less onerous than those of the packhorse: this done, he turned to her friends, and congratulated them upon the great alliance she had made. They showed a due sense of their good fortune, especially when the nuptial presents came to be distributed among the chiefs and relatives, amounting to about one hundred and eighty dollars. The company soon retired, and now the worthy trapper found, indeed, that he had no green girl to deal with; for the knowing dame at once assumed the style and dignity of a trapper's wife, taking possession of the lodge as her undisputed empire; arranging every thing according to her own taste and habits; and appearing as much at home, and on as easy terms with the trapper, as if they had been man and wife for years.

The free trapper, while a bachelor, has no greater pet than his horse; but the moment he takes a wife (a sort of brevet rank in matrimony occasionally bestowed upon some Indian fair one, like the heroes of ancient chivalry, in the open field), he discovers that he has a still more fanciful and capricious animal on which to lavish his expenses. No sooner does an Indian belle experience this promotion, than all her actions at once rise and expand to the dignity of her situation; and the purse of her lover, and his credit into the bargain, are tasked to the utmost to fit her out in becoming style. The wife of a free trapper to be equipped and arrayed like any ordinary and undistinguished squaw? Perish the grovelling thought! In the first place, she must have a horse for her own riding; but no jaded, sorry, earth-spirited hack, such as is sometimes assigned by an Indian husband for the transportation of his squaw and her papooses: the wife of a free trapper must have the most beautiful animal she can lay her eyes on. And then as to his decoration: headstall, breast-bands, saddle and crupper, are lavishly embroidered with beads, and hung with thimbles, hawks' bells, and bunches of ribands. From each side of the saddle hangs an *esquimoot*, a sort of pocket, in which she bestows the residue of her trinkets and nicknacks, which cannot be crowded on the decoration of her horse or herself. Over this she folds with great care drapery of scarlet and bright-coloured calicoes, and now considers the caparison of her steed complete.

As to her own person, she is even still more extravagant. Her hair, esteemed beautiful in proportion to its length, is carefully plaited, and made to fall with seeming negligence over each breast. Her riding-hat is stuck full of parti-coloured feathers; her robe, fashioned somewhat after that of the whites, is of red, green, and sometimes grey cloth, but always of the finest texture that can be procured. Her leggings and moccassins are of the most beautiful and expensive workmanship, and, fitting neatly to the foot and ankle, which with the Indian women are generally well formed and delicate, look extremely pretty. Then as to jewellery: in the way of finger-rings, ear-rings, necklaces, and other female glories, nothing within reach of the trapper's means is omitted, that can tend to impress the beholder with an idea of the lady's high estate. To finish the whole, she selects from among her blankets of various dyes, one of some glowing colour, and throwing it over her shoulders with a native grace, vaults into the saddle of her gay prancing steed, and is ready to follow her mountaineer 'to the last gasp with love and loyalty.'

THE USE OF COFFEE AND OTHER SIMPLE BEVERAGES.*

THE introduction of tea and coffee has led to the most wonderful change that ever took place in the diet of modern civilised nations—a change highly important both in a physical and a moral point of view.

Food is taken for two purposes—to nourish and sustain the body, and to refresh, stimulate, or exhilarate the animal spirits. Solids, generally speaking, afford much more nourishment than liquids; but it is worthy of remark, that the refreshing or exhilarating substances, with some trifling exceptions, are all liquids. The body may be supported in vigour upon many different kinds of aliment, and the business of society carried on almost equally well, whether men live on fish, flesh, or fowl, on corn, pulse, or nutritious roots, or a mixture of all these together. Considered as a social being, it is of little consequence what man eats, but it is of great consequence what he drinks. Upon the nature of the refreshing and stimulating beverage consumed, depends the state of the animal spirits, and this in its turn has a powerful influence upon the sensations, the mental activity, the feelings, the temper—in a word, upon the social and moral character of the individual. Previous to the introduction of tea and coffee, *fermented liquors* of some species—wine, ale, beer, or cider—were the drinks universally used by persons of both sexes, for the purpose of exhilaration. Every body has heard of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honour breakfasting upon beef-steaks and ale. Now, the stimulating quality of all these liquors arises from the portion of alcohol they contain; and hence the vivacity of spirits which they excite, is in fact merely a lower species of intoxication. Three evils necessarily attend the habitual use of such a beverage. First, that even when used in moderation, it generally confuses the brain as much as it quickens its activity; secondly, that a little thoughtlessness or want of control, leads to inebriety; and, thirdly, that when the excitement has subsided, a proportional depression of spirits follows, while the sensibility of the system is impaired, and in course of time worn out, by the constantly recurring action of the alcoholic stimulus. Let us suppose that when these drinks were in universal use as articles of food, and when statesmen, lawyers, and merchants, were no doubt often seen with muddy heads in a forenoon, any one had discovered a species of wine or ale which had the refreshing and exhilarating effects required, without confusing the brain or leading to intoxication, would not such a man have merited a statue from the conservators of the peace in every town and county of the empire? Now, this is exactly what the introduction of tea and coffee has accomplished. These beverages have the admirable advantage of affording stimulus, without producing intoxication, or any of its evil consequences. To the weary or exhausted, they are beyond measure refreshing. They give activity to the intellect, without confusing the head, or being followed by that annoying depression which impels the drinker of ale or spirits to deeper and more frequent potations, till he ends in sottishness and stupidity.

* The above article is abridged, with a few alterations, from one which appeared a few years ago in the *Scotsman* newspaper.

To the studious they are invaluable; and they are perfectly adapted to the use of females, which ale or wine never can be. They render the spirits elastic, the fancy "nimble and forgetive;" and hence they greatly aid the flow of rational and cheerful conversation, and promote courtesy, amenity of manners, serenity of temper, and social habits. The excitement of wine, ale, or spirits, even if it were as pure in its nature, never stops at a proper pitch. The drinker of these liquors has hardly become gay or animated, when a glass or two additional carries him to the stage of boisterous jollity, which is too often followed by beastly inebriety. Then his carousals are succeeded by a woful flatness. He is listless, torpid, unsocial, perhaps crabbed and sulky, till he is again on the road to intoxication. Take half a dozen of men even who are not drunkards, and observe what a difference there is in their conversation, in point of propriety, piquancy, and easy cheerfulness, in the two hours after a coffee breakfast, and the two hours after a dinner at which they have been enjoying wine or spirits merely in moderation. Lovers of tea or coffee are in fact rarely drinkers; and hence the use of these beverages has benefited both manners and morals. Raynal observes, that the use of tea has contributed more to the sobriety of the Chinese than the severest laws, the most eloquent discourses, or the best treatises of morality. Upon the whole, we imagine the observant reader will go along with us in thinking, that coffee is a softener of the manners, and a friend to civilisation.

Plenty of milk is essential to the preparation of good coffee, and with this accompaniment it affords, in our opinion, a much more nourishing and wholesome beverage than tea, though perhaps not so light or gently exhilarating. The art of preparing coffee is not very well understood in this country, as every one will admit who has tasted the superb and delicious beverage which is served up in the cafés and restaurants of Paris.* There are different modes of preparing it, and these need not here be defined, for all are less or more acquainted with them. We need only remark, that the chief point to be attended to is masking the beverage strong, and free of sediment. Great care should be taken to use the coffee as soon after it is roasted and ground as possible, for the best properties escape by exposure to the air.

The late Count Rumford, who was a great consumer of coffee, wrote a memoir in praise of its nutritive and medicinal qualities. Many medical men have eulogised its virtues; and if we had time, it would not be difficult, we believe, to collect a cento of testimonies in its favour. Hooper says, "Good Turkey coffee is by far the most salutary of all liquors drunk at meal time. It possesses nervous and astringent qualities, and may be drunk with advantage at all times, except when there is bile in the stomach. If drunk warm within an hour after dinner, it is of singular use to those who have headache from weakness in the stomach, contracted by sedentary habits, close attention, or accidental drunkenness. It is of service when the digestion is weak, and persons afflicted with the sick headache are much benefited by its use in some instances, though this effect is by no means uniform."

The coffee bean is the produce of a plant which grows to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, generally in a pyramidal form, with whitish-yellow flowers, which are followed by a red berry about the size of a small cherry, inclosing in two distinct cavities two grains, flat on one side and convex on the other, which are known by the familiar name of coffee beans.

Coffee was introduced into France in 1669, when Soliman Aga, who then resided at Paris for a year, first made it known to the French. They soon displayed a partiality for its use, that has been progressively increasing. The Dutch were the first to transport it from Mocha, where they had purchased a few plants, to their own colonies at Batavia, whence they exported it to Amsterdam. From that city the French consul sent a plant to Louis XIV. It was placed in a hothouse, and thrived so astonishingly, that the project of transporting it to Martinique suggested itself to the government, as likely to be very advantageous. Three plants were accordingly sent, of which two perished by the way, and the third was preserved solely by the care of Captain Declieux, who, during a long and stormy passage, shared with it his ration of fresh water, and thus preserved its life. This plant was the source of all the coffee plantations afterwards established at Martinique, Guadalupe, and St Domingo.

* We do not agree with the writer in this observation. We have tasted much better coffee in Edinburgh, that roasted by the celebrated Law, than we ever drank in Paris.

SINGULAR WILL.

An inhabitant of Montgaillard left the following testament:—"It is my will that any one of my relations who shall presume to shed tears at my funeral shall be disinherited; he, on the other hand, who laughs the most heartily, shall be sole heir. I order, that neither the church nor my house shall be hung with black cloth; but that, on the day of my burial, the house and church shall be decorated with flowers and green boughs. Instead of the tolling of bells, I will have drums, fiddles, and fifes. All the musicians of Montgaillard and its environs shall attend the funeral. Fifty of them shall open the procession with hunting tunes, waltzes, and minuets." This will created the more surprise, as the deceased had always been denominated by his family the *Misanthrope*, on account of his gloomy and reserved character.

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPERS.

NEITHER the most humble individual, nor what is considered one of the meanest of occupations, is to be despised. This is illustrated by the following little story, which we quote from an old volume of the *Literary Gazette* :—

"The sultan of a certain eastern country gave notice that on a particular day he would entertain the nobles of his court with some field sports. The courtiers were immediately in a state of preparation, the attendants were every one upon the alert, and all was on the tiptoe of expectation, for all knew that a feast would follow, and all were eager to follow a feast, as the sultan was distinguished as an epicure, and his courtiers were not a pin behind him.

The wished-for day arrived, and at the first dawn the huntsmen, their helpers, and all that belonged to the train and pomp of an eastern hunt, were in readiness. On the sultan himself the prospect of the sport had made some impression, and he did not keep his nobles more than three hours waiting. The prostrations were made, the sultan was seated, and a signal was given for his favourite repast, which, on days of exercise, he was accustomed to order; but, oh! wonder of wonders! the signal was not answered by the immediate appearance of the banquet. It was repeated with little success. The courtiers who dared to look, rolled their eyes about in all directions, the mutts were distinctly seen to move, and the favourite sultana alone dared to meet the eye of her lord, and finding there no immediate killing orders, began to breathe freely; at the same moment a confused murmur was heard, and the venerable person of the chief cook was seen making his way to the throne, before the awful majesty of which, throwing himself flat as the protuberance of his body would permit, he thus began :—

"Light of the Sun, Splendour of the Moon, Eclipse of the Stars, Mightier than the mightiest! the life of thy slave is but as a grain of sand before thee. The sultan here cut short his speech along with his head—the prime minister was dispatched to discover the cause the chief cook had been so long coming, and he found the kitchen in consternation. He learned that the court chimney-sweeper, in order to ruin the cook, who had levied a tax in addition from the perquisites of his soot-bag, had neglected the orders for sweeping the chimney on the day previous to the hunt, whereby a quantity of soot falling on the fire, had spoiled the favourite mess.

By this time, the storm brewing on the empty stomach of the sultan had reached its climax, and scarce had his minister intimated the occasion, when an immediate order was given to execute all the chimney-sweepers in his metropolis. A few stragglers only were found on whom to execute this summary order. The principal court sweep, foreseeing consequences, had retreated with his family, and as many of his tribe as he could warn of the mischief which he knew would follow, to a neighbouring state then at war with his quondam prince.

But the sultan waits—and wait he must; for, as to having his victuals cooked by an ordinary cook at an ordinary kitchen, the thing was not to be done; so taking some dried sweetmeats and coffee in his harem, the day's pleasure was reversed; but the mischief was not over, for the palace kitchen could have no fire till the chimney was cleansed, and the sultan called a council, by which it was concluded, that chimney-sweepers were of use, and by proclamation a pardon was offered to such as would come forth from their concealments, and operate as before. But caution and distrust had so wrought on the sable community, that not one (if any had remained) appeared. The evil increased, foul chimneys were every where complained of, and a reward was added to the pardon of the sultan; but still without effect.

In the mean time, a few fires broke out, and a few houses were consumed, from the accumulation of soot; and such was the general panic, that men began to think of their own safety in preference to the homage due to their first magistrate; and even went so far as to accuse him of rashness, in hastily putting an end to what was discovered on all hands to be so useful and necessary a part of the community.

The sultan continued to assemble his councils, who were instructed in all the learning and wisdom of antiquity, but who had never yet discovered that so trifling an article as sweeping a chimney might inconvenience and even menace the overthrow of a mighty empire. Insurrections were already on foot, and the precipitancy of the monarch was the ground of complaint.

The scavengers now began to feel their importance, and the city was in danger of becoming a prey to pestilence from its filth; when the sultan, a politic man in the main, though a little too hasty, entered into negotiations with the exiled sweep master, who, on the promise of a pardon, a place, and a pension, returned to the duties of his occupation, and brought his brethren of the brush over by making terms for them. Upon this turn of affairs, the other orders of the state returned respectively to their employment. As the grandees had by this time undertaken to do their own dirty work, the ladies of the seraglio made their own beds, and the favourite sultana was said to have been seen mending her own stockings; for as the revolt had become general, the necessity of the case was urgent, and even young sweeps were in training from the younger children of respectable families; for, as a title had been added by way of a douceur to the original mover of the revolt, the profession was no longer thought degrading.

It was thus that necessity first showed the importance of an humble part of society, and pointed out a remedy, by putting them upon more equal footing with the more wealthy and exalted; and the mutual compact was cemented; the sultan gave a grand hunt on the occasion, and a tolerable cook being obtained, a good fire and a clean chimney ensured him his favourite meal, and the day went off without the loss of a single life, except that of a bear which they brought home in triumph.

TIT FOR TAT.

A young Englishman while at Naples was introduced at an assembly of one of the first ladies, by a Neapolitan gentleman. While he was there, his snuff-box was stolen from him. The next day, being at another house, he saw a person taking snuff out of his box. He ran to his friend.—"There (said he), that man in blue, with gold embroidery, is taking snuff out of the box stolen from me yesterday. Do you know him? Is he not a sharper?" "Take care (said the other); that man is of the first quality." "I do not care for his quality (said the Englishman); I must have my snuff-box again; I'll go and ask him for it." "Pray (said his friend) be quiet, and leave it to me to get back your box." Upon this assurance the Englishman went away, after inviting his friend to dine with him the next day. He accordingly came, and as he entered, "There (said he), I have brought you your snuff-box." "Well, how did you obtain it?" "Why (said the Neapolitan nobleman), I did not wish to make a noise about it; therefore I picked his pocket of it."—*Duten's Memoirs.*

W O M A N.

[From a small poetical work just published, entitled "Hopes of Matrimony," by John Holland. Groombridge, London.]

Hail, Woman! whose transcendent charms unfold
Celestial lineaments in earthly mould?
Shrined in the heart, affection bows to thee,
Fair object thou of Love's idolatry!
Man boasts his majesty, yet owns the while,
The conquering influence of thy frown or smile:
Thy frown can chafe the haughtiest spirit's pride;
Creation's lord walks humbly at thy side.
Thy smile, since woman's empire first began,
Calls up the latent energies of man:
To high achievements tempts his soul to press,
Thyself his glorious girdon of success.
To cherish him, to watch his brief repose;
To him the elements of thought to teach,
Guard his first step, and prompt his earliest speech:
"Tis thine to wake the latent powers of youth
To generous manhood and inenuous truth;
Over sinking age to smile in life's eclipse,
And pour the balm of comfort on his lips;
When o'er his sick-bed bends thy angel form,
Love's balm of promise through affliction's storm.
Yet where—oh, where, amidst created space,
Does woman's presence shed the sweetest grace?
Where Albion's land, a glorious spot is seen,
The world's just wonder, and the ocean's queen;
And, bound within the girdle of her smile,
Scotia's proud hills, and Erin's emerald isle.
Hither, how'er th' unchanging Briton roams,
Hope flies for country, friendship, wife, and home.
How fair is home, in fancy's picturing theme,
In wedded life, in love's romantic dream!
Thence springs each hope; there every wish returns,
Purse as the flame, that upward, heavenward, burns;
There sits the wife, whose radiant smile is given,
The daily sun of the domestic heaven;
From morn to noon, dispensing bliss to all
Who may within her sphere of influence fall.
And when calm evening sheds a secret power,
Her looks of love emparadise the hour;
Her presence more entrancing to the view,
Than the bright moon in depths of stillst blue.
While children round, a beauteous train, appear
Attendant stars revolving in her sphere;
In solid, social, unpoetic pride,
The sacred circle of our own fireside.

"WASSAIL BOWLE, OR GRACE CUP."

Wassail, or was-hail, in Saxon signifies your health, and is now used in a very limited sense, and only at the time of Christmas. It anciently signified mirth and festivity in general, and in this sense it occurs in Shakespeare as follows :—

"The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swagging unsprung reels."
And Milton likewise says,

"I'm loth to meet the rudeness and swill'd insolence
Of such late wassailers."

Wassail was a great ceremony at court on Twelfth Night in the reign of Henry VII. "When the steward cometh in at the doore with the wassel, he must crieth three times, 'wassel, wassel, wassel,' and then the chaplain was to answer with a good song." In a very old house at Bexley, in Kent, is an oaken chimney-piece, on which is carved a wassel-bowle, resting on the branches of an apple-tree. On one side is the word "Wassel," and on the other "Scheinheile;" it is at least as old as the fourteenth century. The custom of throwing toast, and pouring out libations to apple-trees for proving a fruitful year, was called wassel: the term is still applied to the drinking-songs sung in the cider country on the eve of Epiphany, when the ceremony is performed. In Holderness, and other parts of Yorkshire, it is the custom to carry about with the wassel-cup an image of our Saviour, together with a quantity of roasted apples, so that this custom has been restricted to the convivial season of Christmas, and the custom of roasting apples on Christmas Eve still continues in some districts. The origin of the term wassel is traced to the story of Vorigern and Rowena, the daughter of Hengist. On their first interview, she kneeled before him, and presenting a cup of wine, said, "Hlaford Kyning, wæs-heil!" that is, Lord King, health be to you! The king being unacquainted with the Saxon language, asked the meaning of the terms, and being told that they wished his health, and that he should answer by saying, "drinc heil," he did so, and commanded her to drink; then taking the cup, he kissed the damsel and pledged her. From this time the custom long remained in Britain, and whoever drank to another at a feast, said "wacht heil," and he that received the cup answered "drinc heil." The wassel songs were sung during the festivities of Christmas, and in earlier times, by the itinerant minstrels, of whom, with the practice, some remains may be traced in our present waits and carols. One of these songs is preserved in the British Museum.

A wassel-bowle, or cup, was anciently placed on the tables of princes as well as of abbots. In the eleventh volume of the *Archæologia*, there is an engraving of one which formerly belonged to Glastonbury Abbey, and a dissertation upon it by Dr Milner. The inside (which holds two quarts) is furnished with eight pegs, at equal

distances, one below the other, in conformity with Edgar's law, to repress excess in drinking. This measurement allowed of half a pint to each person. There is one now to be seen at Mr Greenall's, Great Compton-Street, Soho. In the preface to the history of *Tom Thumb the Little*, published in the year 1621, is the following passage :—

"Now you must imagine me to sit by a good fire, among a company of good fellows, over a well-spiced wassel-bowle of Christmas ale, telling of these merrie tales, which hereafter followe."—*Old Scrap-Book.*

A MEMBER TO LET.

When Mr Thomas Sheridan, son of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was candidate for the representation of a Cornish borough, he told his father that if he succeeded, he should place a label on his forehead with the words "to let," and side with the party that made the best offer. "Right, Tom," said the father, "but don't forget to add the word 'unfurnished.'"

A NEW METHOD OF TEACHING MUSIC.

A Highland pipe having a scholar to teach, disdained to crack his brain with the names of semibreves, minims, crotchetts, and quavers. "Here, Donald," said he, "take your pipes, lad, and gie's a blast. So, vera weel blaws indeed, but what's a sound, Donald, without sense? Ye may blaw for ever without making a tune o' set, if I dinna tell ye of the queen things on the paper mast help ye. Ye see that big fellow, wi' a round open face (pointing to a semibreve between the two lines of a bar); he moves slowly from that line to this, while ye beat ane wi' your fit, and gie a long blast; if now ye put a leg to him, ye mak twa o' him, and he'll move twice as fast; and if ye black his face, he'll run four times faster than the fellow wi' the white face; but if after blacking his face, ye'll bend his knee, or tie his legs, he'll hop eight times faster than the white-faced chap that I showed you first. Now, whene'er you blaw your pipes, Donald, remember this: that the tighter those fellows' legs are tied, the faster they'll run, and the quicker they're sure to dance."

THE UNSUCCESSFUL CLUB.

A club is so called, from its members having failed in dramatic writing. One condemned farce entitles a man to be a member *instante*. If his comedy be withdrawn after the second night, he must be ballotted for; but if his tragedy be hissed off during the first act, he comes in by acclamation, and may order what dinner he pleases. The perpetual president, with a silver cattail at his button-hole, proudly boasts, that, during a seven-years' probation, his most endurable dramatic bantling was a mélodrame that set every body asleep. He counts his hisses as a warrior does his wounds, and hopes in time, by dint of bad acting, to make the people in the pit tear up the benches.—*New Monthly Magazine.*

ANCIENT TRIAL BY JURY.

About the year 800, a wooden statue of the virgin which stood on the Rood-dee, near Chester, was carried by a flood to the banks of the parish of Havarden, and there preserved: but, as in the following year a fatal disease took place among the cattle, the priest and priest-ridden people of Havarden ascribed their misfortune to their sacrilegious detaining the statue. A jury was accordingly convened to determine what it was best to do, when they advised that the statue should, in due form be carried back, and replaced on the Rood-dee. The list of this jury is still preserved, and among them was one of the family of the Gate; and, till this day, at a place called the Gate, still reside the family of the same Corbyn.

WINTER IN LONDON.

It is difficult to form an idea of the kind of winter day in London. The smoke of fossil coals forms an atmosphere, perceptible for many miles, like a great round cloud attached to the earth. In the town itself, when the weather is cloudy and foggy, which is frequently the case in winter, the smoke increases the general dingy hue, and terminates the length of every street, with a fixed grey mist, receding as you advance. But when some rays of the sun happen to fall on this artificial atmosphere, it imparts a mass assumes immediately a pale orange tint, similar to the effect of Claude Lorraine glasses—a mild, golden hue, quite beautiful. This air, in the mean time, is loaded with small flakes of smoke in sublimation; a sort of flour of soot, so light as to float without falling. The black smoke sticks to your clothes and linen, and lights upon your face. You just feel something on your nose or your cheek; the finger is applied mechanically, and fixes it into a black patch!—*Journal of a French Traveller.*

A GOOD OPPONENT MEMBER.

When a gentleman now no more made his first speech in the Irish House of Commons, Sir William Osborne asked who he was; and being told, he replied, "Well, I think he will do. If the opposition have enlisted him, they are perfectly in the right, for he seems to have the *finest face* for a *grievance* of any man I ever beheld."

SINGULAR CUSTOMS.

On the quay at Nimeguen, in the United Provinces, two ravens are kept at the public expense: they live in a roomy apartment, with a large wooden cage before it, which serves them for a *balcony*. These birds are feasted every day with the choicest fowls, with as much exactness as if they were for a gentleman's table. The privileges of the city were granted originally upon the observance of this strange custom, which is continued till this day. Many other charters are held upon terms as extraordinary. That of the city of Chester is held by the brutal entertainment of a *bull-bait*; and the descendants of William Penn were obliged to send a *bear-skin* every year to the British monarch, before America became an independent state, as an acknowledgment that the province of Pennsylvania was granted to their family by the crown of England. It was in ancient times the practice to present male mafieactors, on their way to execution, with a great bowl of ale as their last refreshment. This custom last prevailed at York, which gave rise to the saying, that the saddler of Bawtry was hanged for *leaving his ale*. Had he stopped as usual, which he declined, his reprieve, which was actually on the road, would have arrived time enough to have saved him.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

LONDON: Published, with permission of the proprietors, by W. S. Orr, Paternoster Row; and sold by all booksellers and news-men.—Printed by Bradbury and Evans, Whitefriars.